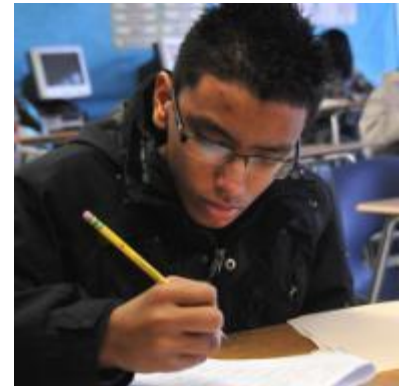


NEWARK ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2018

Newark Public Schools | www.nps.k12.nj.us



AGENDA

1. **Local Control Transition Update**
2. **Update on Recent District Progress**
3. **Looking Forward**

LOCAL CONTROL OVERVIEW

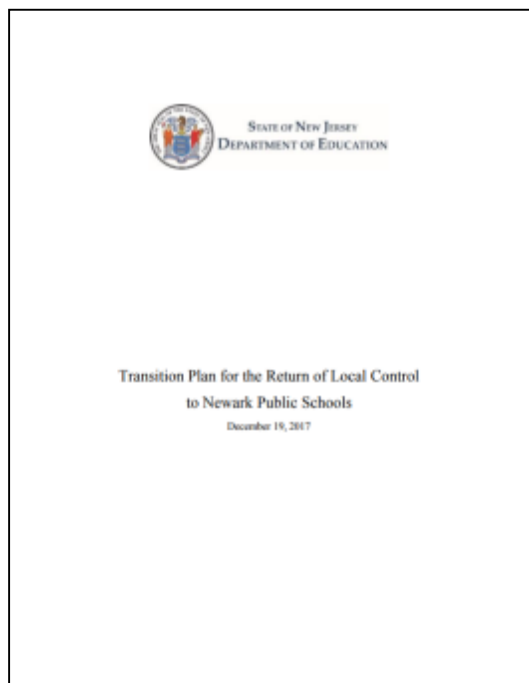


- **The State Board of Education voted on September 13th** to “return operational control to Newark Public Schools (NPS) following the creation and completion of a transition plan”
- **In December, the State Department of Education approved a Transition Plan** to govern the return of local control, effective February 1, 2018
 - Board voted unanimously to appoint Robert Gregory as Interim Superintendent
- **On February 1, 2018 the Advisory Board officially became the Newark Board of Education**

This process represents a historic set of steps and is a tribute to the many years of hard work by the School Board, district employees, the Mayor, and all Newark community members. We thank the State Board of Education for your partnership during this process.

TRANSITION PLAN MILESTONES

NPS is currently on track to meet all major milestones for the interim period on the Transition Plan.



- Appointment of Anzella Nelms, former Deputy Superintendent at NPS, as Highly Skilled Professional (HSP)
- Completed full transition of personnel duties.
- Board training is underway in core areas.
 - All sessions due for completion by March 1 have been completed
 - New training modules are being developed based on needs
- District is on track to pass a balanced budget for the 18-19 school year.
- Plan last for two years, expiring Jan 31, 2020

TRANSITION PLAN MILESTONES

Governance Progress

- Development and adoption of a Board Handbook
- Clarification of specific duties – between roles as the advisory board and the Board of Education, and between board and district leadership.
- Committees are receiving on-going training and board has held retreats each month to improve collaboration.

All of these measures will allow us to continue to establish healthy working relationships with Board and meet milestones in the transition plan.

CONTINUING THE TRANSITION PROCESS

Upcoming Key Events:

- **Superintendent Search - Now through June**: Engaging in a superintendent search and hiring a superintendent (targeted for a start date of July 1)
 - Search committee consist of 3 board members, 3 Newark leaders jointly selected by Mayor and Commissioner, and 1 member appointed by commissioner.
- **Referendum - November 6**: Holding a public referendum to determine if school board members will be elected (Type I) or be appointed by the Mayor (Type II)
- **Training - Ongoing**: Further training for board members and district leaders

Most importantly, we know that local control is not a one time event – but a process will require our collective efforts over the next several months and years.

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UPDATE ON RECENT DISTRICT PROGRESS

Moving forward, we know that we must set aside individual concerns to focus on the single most important question: **What's Best for Newark Kids?**

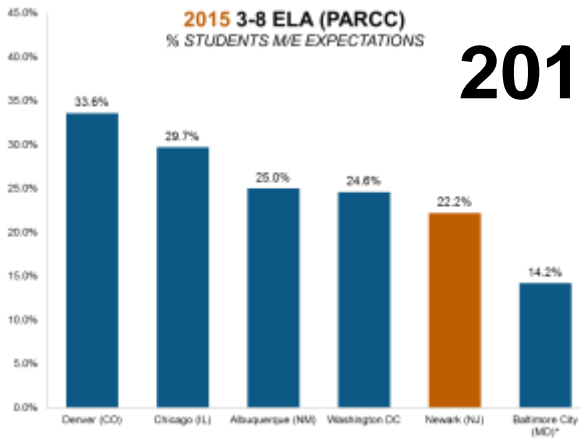
I will update you on how this is happening in a few core ways:

- Prioritizing Student Results
- Fostering Community Involvement
- Attracting and Keeping Talented Educators
- Improving Fiscal and Operational Efficiency



PRIORITIZING STUDENT LEARNING

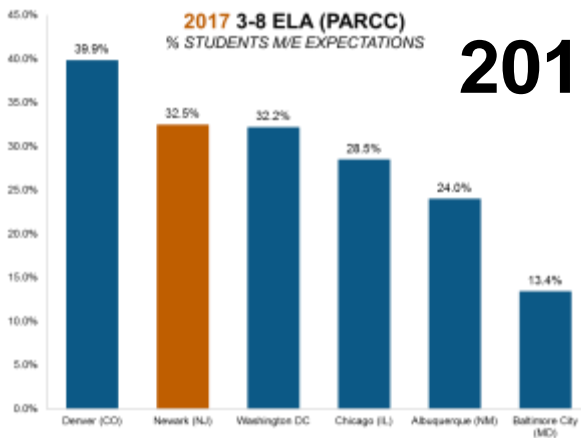
2015



Moving into the transition, Newark Schools were making great progress overall, as evidenced by:

- **Rising Graduation Rates:** Between 2010 and 2017, Newark graduation rates increased by nearly 20%. Now a record-high 78% of our students graduate.
- **Outperforming Similar Districts:** Newark's students are now outperforming peers in most similar districts across the state and the country in both reading and math.

2017



- **Gains for Low-Income Students:** Low-income Newark students (80% of enrollment) now outperform peers in nearly all other large U.S. school districts, based on PARCC exam results.
- **More Students College Bound:** In 2017, a record number of Newark students were accepted to college—including elite universities like Harvard, Yale, Rutgers, and leading HBCUs. And Newark graduates were awarded more than \$15 million in scholarships.

PRIORITIZING STUDENT LEARNING

While these gains are exciting, we know we have much work to do. A few priority areas for improvement include:

- Continuing to close gaps between schools within Newark, and with wealthier districts across NJ.
- Boosting the number of our students who not only attend, but graduate from, two- and four-year colleges.
- Cutting down on chronic absenteeism, which lowers student achievement, particularly in Pre-K and early grades and in our High Schools.



PRIORITIZING STUDENT LEARNING

During the interim period, we are taking some concrete actions to prioritize student learning:

- **School Visits to identify trends and needs**

- Have completed 18 School visits since February 1st. These visits:
 - Assess impact of Core Classroom/ Strategic Planning Process for 17-18 SY
 - Assess school's implementation of academic/pedagogical investments in District Strategic Plan
 - Determine quality of administrative cabinet including Principals and VPs along with Coaches and Academic Interventionist
 - Identify additional support needed for lower performing schools

- **Focus on Actionable areas where we can immediately build on current momentum:**

- Review and revamp CTE programs: align to jobs available in the Newark Metro area and across the US (Coding initiatives, Transportation and Logistics, etc).
- Professional Development for School Leaders focused on coaching and developing strong teachers.
- Launching the state-of-the-art Students 2 Science Laboratory in Downtown Newark



FOSTERING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Moving into the transition, and notably over the last two years, Newark schools were improving community relations.

- **2016-2019 Strategic Plan:** NPS held 21 major community planning events and surveyed more than 500 people to help shape our plan for the future.
- **South Ward Community Schools Initiative:** NPS worked closely with Mayor Ras Baraka to launch a program that promotes student success holistically—giving families access to school-based health services, social workers and mental health professionals, afterschool programs, and job training classes.
- **New Community Partnerships:** Generous outside groups have benefitted Newark students with 200,000 donated books, 25,000 free eye exams, a new playground for Lafayette Street School, and more than \$5 million toward a new science lab.

FOSTERING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

During the interim period, we are taking some concrete actions to foster community involvement. These include:



- **Engaging the Community**

- In collaboration with Superintendent Search firm, district hosted ward by ward community conversations about the Superintendent Search process and gathering feedback from over 1500 individuals on the direction of the district.

- **Engaging Students**

- We supported students during national school walkouts to engage in a civic dialogue and learn from the experience.
- We will be hosting another round of conversations with students and community members to assess our progress against our current strategic plan, and their feedback on the district's general direction in upcoming years.



- **Building partnerships and collaborative efforts** with CBOs, anchor institutions, health care and philanthropic community, and city government in an effort to break down silos.

ATTRACTING AND KEEPING TALENTED EDUCATORS

Moving into the transition, NPS was getting better at attracting and retaining great educators:

- **New four-year NTU contract approved in 2017:**
 - The contract provided salary increases for all Newark educators in NTU
 - Gave teachers more time for professional development
 - Retained performance bonuses
 - NPS also just reached an agreement with administrator's union to provide raises and the same performance incentives.
- **Keeping our best educators:** Our retention rates keep rising. Last year, 97% of Highly Effective educators and 94% of Effective educators returned.
- **Filling vacancies at higher rates:** At the start of the 2017-2018 school year, NPS had filled nearly 99% of all vacancies, ensuring that all our students were set to learn from day one.

ATTRACTING AND KEEPING TALENTED EDUCATORS

During the interim period, we are taking some concrete actions to make sure that we attract and keep great educators. These include:



- **Recruiting more great educators:** NPS is working to attract more talent by creating new and stronger partnerships with five universities and launching the TEACH Newark Campaign.
- **Host City Wide Celebration of Teaching and Learning (Spring Colloquium- Week of Learning)**
 - Opportunity for our best teachers to host workshops for their colleagues and highlight their practices in varied content areas.
 - Highlight student work and projects conducted throughout the academic year
 - Reward teachers for best practices
 - Hear from renowned keynote speaker

IMPROVING FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Moving into the transition, Newark schools were improving financial and operational efficiencies. These included:

- **Improved Fiscal Responsibility:** By re-examining legacy line items and contracts over last two years, we not only closed large deficits, but enabled an additional \$6 million investment in Newark schools and put the district on solid financial footing.
- **Collaboration with School Board:** The district and school board members have collaborated to create better structures to govern the district through committees and other mechanisms. This work led to improved QSAC scores which helped the district regain local control.

IMPROVING FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

During the interim period, we are taking some concrete actions to make sure that we attract and keep great educators. These include:

- **Fiscal and Operational Efficiency (Budget Planning and Submission)**
 - NPS received a 5 percent increase in our allocated funding for the 18-19 school year.
 - This allocation will allow us to:
 - Substantially increase the overall amount of money we send to our schools.
 - Make strategic investments in areas of high need.
 - For example: Special Education, Bilingual, and Wraparound Support Services
 - Accelerate our progress toward a sound fiscal future.



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LOOKING FORWARD: WORKING WITH THE STATE OF NJ

- Moving to fund SFRA as outlined by the Governor
- Working with SDA to continue to invest in new buildings
- Prioritizing bilingual educators
- Maintaining high standards and comparable assessments
- Continuing to improve early childhood education (PreK) in SDA districts

LOOKING FORWARD: NPS AND THE CITY OF NEWARK

- Community Responsibility and Collaboration
- Comprehensive Plan for Students PreK through College
- Unity of Purpose in Newark

